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The document provides 10 brief articles on activities for mainstreamed handicapped students. Included are the following titles: "Tips on Mainstreaming--Do's and Don'ts for Activity Programs;" "Mainstreaming--A Goal and A Process;" "What To Do When You Meet a Handicapped Person;" "Tips for Dealing with Handicapped Persons;" "Relating to Orthopedically and Visually Handicapped Individuals;" "Making Relationships More Comfortable Between Blind and Sighted Individuals;" "When You Have a Hearing Impaired Player on the Team or in Class;" "Communicating with Hearing Impaired Persons in One-To-One and Group Situations;" "First Steps in Mainstreaming;" and "Mainstreaming Does Work." (SBH)

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TIPS ON MAINSTREAMING:
DO'S AND DON'TS IN ACTIVITY PROGRAMS

*REFLECTIONS ON MAINSTEAMS**

It occurs to us that mainstreams do not necessarily run a smooth, tranquil, straight course across the landscape. Mainstreams may follow a twisting, winding, or even tortuous route. They may have eddies, whirlpools, rapids, falls, dams, and dikes, and you can never tell what you'll find in the bullrushes.

The Stream itself will not get the children where they need to go. It also takes the craft best suited to each individual's plotted course, with pilots equipped to aid him to avoid the shoals and un-navigable currents, to prevent him from coming to harm, or from drifting aimlessly into the pounding surf of the sea of life.

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TIPS ON MAINSTREAMING:
DO'S AND DON'TS FOR ACTIVITY PROGRAMS

Accept me as I am is the first step in our working together.

Legislation and litigation mandate greater inclusion of individuals with different handicapping conditions in regular school programs and community activities. This procedure is called by many different names--least restrictive environment, most normal setting feasible, normalization, mainstreaming, zero-reject principle, deinstitutionalization, integration, right to community services. Regardless of terminology, people from many different walks of life--providers of services, parents of both handicapped and nonhandicapped children, and some handicapped individuals themselves--are apprehensive and fear including individuals with different handicapping conditions in programs and activities with nonhandicapped participants.

So often negative attitudes are caused by able-bodied persons who have not had opportunities to meet and know impaired, disabled, and handicapped persons as individuals. As a result attitudes and relationships continue to be influenced by labels and categorical thinking; sterotypes abound.

LABELS

There are labels in my shirts;
They tell me front from back,
My "P.F. Flyers" make me run faster on the track.
"Billie the Kid" made my pants
And "Bonnie Doon" my socks.
Momma says "Matel" made my brightly colored blocks.
There are labels on most all things,
And that is plain to see.
But Momma, why's there a label on me?

Jean Caywood
Physical Education Instructor
Plano, Texas

When individuals with even the most severe handicapping conditions are known as individuals--people with the the same ranges of interests, aspirations, abilities, biases, problems, and hang-ups as their able-bodied counterparts--the first and possibly most important steps have been taken toward acceptance. Not only is acceptance gained, but appreciation and understanding developed as individuals with various handicapping conditions are looked upon, liked or disliked, loved or hated, accepted or rejected because of their own personality characteristics, personal actions, and behavioral patterns.

Obviously the earlier this process begins the sooner impaired, disabled, and handicapped persons are recognized as individuals and the less likely they are to be rejected categorically. In schools and communities where children with various handicapping conditions have participated in Headstart programs

or have been integrated in activities in natural and unpretentous ways, little if any rejection has been evidenced toward impaired, disabled, and handicapped children. Differences have been looked upon as a natural and expected part of life. Handicapping conditions are viewed and accepted in the same ways as other differences displayed by members in gangs, neighborhoods, or classes--some are boys, others girls; some are tall, others short; some are happy, others sad; some have dark skins, others light; some wear glasses, others do not; some have red hair, others blond or brunette; some are well coordinated, others have difficulties in fine motor activities. The process of recognizing differences is an important part of the maturing process in growing-up.

The situation is not so logical and easy when older children, adolescents, or adults face associating with and accepting impaired, disabled, and handicapped persons in school, work, or play. Attitudes and misconceptions have developed over the years--individuals without sight or hearing, people without arms or legs, persons with unsteady gait or speech problems, or those with intellectual, learning, or emotional problems are not only looked upon as different but often considered deficient, deviant, and not really whole persons. Unfortunately, the mass media often do little to reverse this process or to emphasize abilities rather than disabilities. In fact, many times television exposures, radio programs, magazine features, and newspaper articles directly or subtly reinforce attitudes that promote undesirable emotions such as sympathy and pity or even antagonism, prejudice, and further rejection. Consequently many--possibly a sizeable majority--of the general population not only do not know what to do when meeting handicapped individuals but often actively avoid them.

> "I do not choose to be a common man. It is my right to be uncommon -- if I can. I seek opportunity -- not security. I do not wish to be a kept citizen, humbled and dulled by having the state look after me. I want to take the calculated risk; to dream and to build, to fail and to succeed. I refuse to barter incentive for a dole. I prefer the challenge of life to the guaranteed existence; the thrill of fulfillment to the stale calm of Utopia. I will not trade freedom for beneficence nor my dignity for a handout. I will never cower before any master nor bend to any threat. It is my heritage to stand erect, proud and unafraid; to think and act for myself, enjoy the benefit of my creations and to face the world boldly and say, this I have done."

MAINSTREAMING: A GOAL AND A PROCESS

Whatever the mind of man can conceive and believe, it can achieve.
Napoleon Hill

The word mainstreaming is often misunderstood and inappropriately defined. Mainstreaming is both a goal and a process. Mainstreaming and integration are not synonomous; physical proximity does not guarantee social integration; being together does not in itself bring about acceptance. However, both research and experience show that real understanding, true acceptance, and elimination of prejudices are enhanced by direct people-to-people contact--when people get to know each other as individuals, not as parts of categories. Putting individuals in programs or activities for which they are not ready is cruel; to keep them out of these same programs and activities when they are ready and can participate is criminal!

Mainstreaming represents one level in the continuum of services required by the least restrictive alternative mandate contained in the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (P.L. 94-142) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (P.L. 93-112). Rules and regulations for P.L. 94-142 require that each public agency insure a continuum of alternative placements to meet the needs of handicapped children for special education and related services. Instruction in regular classes, special classes, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions are all included as integral parts of this continuum of services. Provisions must also be made for supplementary services such as resource room or itinerant instruction in conjunction with regular class placement. These requirements are consistent with provisions of Section 504 that mandate program accessibility and appropriate accommodations so that handicapped individuals can participate to the maximum degree possible with their nonhandicapped classmates and peers. This process does not...

...suggest massive return to or placement of all children with learning problems in regular grades;

...refer to separate settings as equivalent placements;

...mean the end of all self-contained special classes as service vehicles for children.[1]

This process does suggest...

...a continuum of appropriate service alternatives to allow placement of children as individuals, not members of categories;

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[1]Based on materials developed by Dale E. Coons, Department of Counseling and Special Education, University of Akron, Akron, Ohio, and appearing in IRUC Briefings (Vol. 1, No. 3), May 1976, page 5, published by Physical Education and Recreation for the Handicapped: Information and Research Utilization Center (American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation, 1201 16th Street, N. W., Washington, D. C., 20036).

...some system other than the present dichotomy of either placement in regular classes or placement in categorically defined special classes;

...preventive services being as important for children with potential learning problems as intervention for children with identified learning problems;

...a need to integrate all levels and types of handicapped children with handicapped peers to the maximum extent possible even if initially integration is only possible in non-academic, play, or lunch areas, or through flexible scheduling to allow regular interactions between handicapped and nonhandicapped children;

...need for greater understanding of handicapped children by all school personnel;

...placement of handicapped children in their home school districts whenever possible to insure mutual home and school peer relationships;

...new roles for education personnel providing services to handicapped students.[2]

This process emphasizes procedures by which impaired, disabled, and handicapped children are placed in educational programs. Some readjustments are necessary in one's thinking and approaches when dealing with handicapped children, whether in a regular classroom, gymnasium, or swimming pool, on the playfield, in a drama class, or in recreational activities. In the past, the procedure was to label a child, place that child--usually categorically based on handicapping conditions--and then program the class. Often these programs had little if anything to do with needs, abilities, and interests of individual children in the class.

Teachers must really believe that the child rather than the curriculum should be the center of the school.

Now the process is to assess each child's needs, develop a program for each child based on identified needs, and place the child according to individual needs for each activity included in his/her individualized education program. In fact, many of our ideologies and procedures regarding homogeneous and heterogeneous grouping must be carefully reviewed. Have these procedures been designed to help meet interests and needs of individual children or for the administrative and organizational convenience of program personnel?

Handicapped children have the right to grow up in a world which does not set them apart, which looks at them not with scorn or pity or ridicule, but which welcomes them exactly as it welcomes every child, which offers them identical privileges and identical responsibilities.

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[2] Ibid.

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU MEET A HANDICAPPED PERSON.

You cannot individualize instruction
if you do not know the individual.

While each teacher and leader is going to have to deal with impaired, disabled, and handicapped children as he/she is confronted with them, the following tips and suggestions provide ideas as to what to do and what not to do when dealing with individuals having certain handicapping conditions, whether in teaching, recreational, social, or employment situations. These points and suggestions have for the most part come from individuals who themselves have had to deal personally with conditions being discussed. This in-and-of itself suggests an important yet frequently overlooked and neglected approach--involving impaired, disabled, and handicapped persons themselves in helping able-bodied individuals feel more comfortable and at ease in dealing with these populations. So often groups most directly involved and with greatest opportunities to provide important input of this type have been ignored.

"Never check the actions of the child; follow him and watch to prevent any serious accidents, but do not even remove obstacles which he would learn to avoid by tumbling over them a few times. Teach him to jump rope, to swing weights, to raise his body by his arms, and to mingle as far as possible in the rough sports of the older boys. Do not be apprehensive of his safety. If you should see him climbing in the branches of a tree, be assured he is less likely to fall than if he had perfect vision. Do not too much regard bumps on the forehead, rough scratches, or bloody noses, even these may have their good influences. At worst, they affect only the bark and not the system like the rust of inaction."

Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe, patriarch
in the field of education of the
visually handicapped

For additional information see this reference by Harvey N. Switzky and Ted L. Miller:

The Least Restrictive Alternative. *Mental Retardation* (Vol. 16, No. 1), February 1978, pp. 52-54.

TIPS FOR DEALING WITH HANDICAPPED PERSONS

Today if a crippled child possesses normal intelligence, is educated properly, and receives the faith he deserves, it is no longer acceptable for anyone in placing a prop under his body to place a ceiling over his potential.

Earl S. Miers

Anne H. Carlson, Director of the Jamestown (North Dakota) School for Crippled Children and herself a quadriplegic, provides the following Tips for Dealing with Handicapped Persons:

- Offer help when it looks as though it might be needed, but do not insist on it if an individual refuses aid.

- Don't hover--handicapped adults do not wish to be treated as babies.

- When handicapped persons fall, take it easy. Wait for them to give you a cue. If individuals can get up by themselves, they may prefer doing that. If they need a lift, they will tell you which is the easiest way to get them back on their feet.

- Crutches and wheelchairs are necessary accessories. Don't take them away from handicapped persons unless they indicate they would like to have them out of the way. Nothing is more irritating than to have your crutches grabbed quickly as soon as you hit a chair, leaving you stranded!

- Train, plane, and bus steps are hard even for the young and agile. Handicapped individuals often need help here. Again, let them tell you how to help. Those who do not need to be carried up the steps usually have methods of their own for making them. Do not pull an arm or push from behind unless such assistance has been requested. Precarious balance can be lost entirely with such tactics.

- Keep your perspective. As Gertrude Stein might say, "An arm is an arm is an arm," and "A leg is a leg is a leg." It is just that. An arm is an arm and a leg is a leg--it is not the whole person!

- Relax. No matter what you do, if you are friendly and kind, the handicapped person is going to like you.

- Have fun. Talk about the same things you would with any other person. A physical impairment or disability does not necessarily limit interests or dampen a sense of humor.

- Be yourself. Don't be sticky sweet; omit the pious note.

- Let common sense and consideration be your guide and you will never err seriously. Disabled individuals are just like you, only with a physical difference that does not have to make them feel or think differently.

RELATING TO ORTHOPEDICALLY AND VISUALLY HANDICAPPED INDIVIDUALS

If we accept the premise that all people are special, we are better able to deal with individual differences in different individuals.

Specific suggestions for relating to orthopedically and visually handicapped individuals based on materials developed by Susan Phillips, and Michael Ward, and Council for Exceptional Children (1920 Association Drive, Reston, Virginia) include:

- Ask the individual if he/she needs help. If so, what kind? Do not assume that the individual needs more help than requested.
- Ask the individual if he/she needs help when meeting that same person again. Do not assume that the individual needs help again or the same kind of assistance.
- Offer help in ways that deal directly with demands of specific situations; offer help in discrete ways.
- Do not be persistent; supply required help. If an individual does not seem to require further assistance, do not feel obligated to stay. However, you can check this out by asking something like, "Is there anything further I can do?"
- Do not assume that the way you help an individual with an impairment or disability will be the same for all people with similar conditions. Always ask what is the best way to help that individual.
- Recognize that handicapped individuals have different ways of doing things. What looks difficult or awkward may be the easiest way for the individual to perform that task or action.
- Do not be afraid to ask a handicapped person to repeat what he/she said. Most handicapped individuals would rather repeat what they said than to have an able-bodied person fake understanding and subsequent communication.
- Remember that blind or orthopedically handicapped individuals are not necessarily hard of hearing; therefore, there is no need to raise your voice!
- Be senstive to the fact that some handicapped people get tired of asking for help and may forget to say please and thank you. They are not necessarily being impolite.
- Engage in casual conversation to ease tensions if a helping situation lasts any duration of time.

MAKING RELATIONSHIPS MORE COMFORTABLE BETWEEN BLIND AND SIGHTED INDIVIDUALS

I've never let stereotypes--like a blind person can't do that--stand in my way.

Bill Schmidt

Charles Buell, pioneer in physical education, recreation, and sports programs for blind and partially sighted participants, suggests the following points of courtesy to make relationships more comfortable between blind and sighted individuals:

- Please address me directly and not through my guide or companion.
- I can walk more easily with you than with a dog or cane. But don't grab my arm or try to propel me; let me take yours. I'll keep a half step behind to anticipate curbs and steps. Going down stairs I may prefer to hold a railing. When giving me directions, make it plain whether you mean your right or my right.
- Speak to me when you enter the room and tell me who you are--don't play guessing games. Introduce me to the others, including children. Guide my hand to the arm or back of a chair.
- For me, doors should be completely closed or wide open--a half-open door is a hazard; so are toys on the floor. Warn me of coffee tables and projecting lamp shades--I hate to break things.
- At dinner time, tell me quietly how things are arranged. Perhaps my meat will be at six o'clock, peas at eleven o'clock, potatoes at two. And I may ask help in cutting my meat.
- Don't avoid words like see or watch--I use them too! I'm always glad to see you! I watch television!
- I don't want pity. But don't talk about the wonderful compensations of blindness--whatever I've learned has been by hard work.
- I'll discuss blindness with you if you are curious, but it's an old story to me. I have as many other interests as you do.
- If I'm your house guest, show me the bathroom, closet, dresser, window and outlet for my electric razor. The light switch, too--I like to know whether the lights are on.
- Don't think of me as a blind person. I am an individual who happens to be blind.

WHEN YOU HAVE A HEARING IMPAIRED PLAYER ON THE TEAM OR IN CLASS

Our challenge in special education is to reach the unhandicapped mind behind the handicapped senses. To know is more important than to see. To understand is more important than to hear.

Dr. Richard Kinney

Personnel at Lexington (New York) School for the Deaf have developed various Ideas for Families to assist in dealing with deaf and hard-of-hearing children. The following hints, applicable to physical education, recreation, and other activity programs as well as to sports have been adapted from a list of suggestions entitled Hey Coach developed and distributed by personnel at the Lexington School for the Deaf:

You have an individual with a hearing impairment on the team or in class!
No, it's not going to affect how well he/she plays or participates.
But, it might be helpful to understand a few things about hearing impairments that probably are true for individuals on your team or in your class.

- A hearing impaired player is not going to get much out of group meetings, so coaches should make special efforts to have a teammate or him/herself brief the player at some point--before or after a game. However, don't exclude the player from group meetings. Expect him/her to come and treat him/her the same as any other player.

- Remember, nothing is wrong with the intelligence of the individual although language may be simple and speech sound different. When explaining something new, speak as simple as possible. Avoid cliches and idiomatic expressions--tighten up on defense, don't bunch, stick 'em. If you use certain idioms, take time to explain them.

- Hand signals are imperative during a game. Try to use regular official hand signals even when playing without an official referee.

- When talking to the team or class out-of-doors, avoid standing so the hearing impaired individual must look into the sun. It's tough, if not impossible, to lipread that way.

- Don't expect a hearing impaired individual to lipread from the outfield, or across the tennis court, or from the other end of the track.

- When individuals wear hearing aids, it may not appear that they get much out of the aids, but wearing them gives additional clues to what's happening. If possible, a hearing impaired individual should wear an aid while playing in any sport except a contact sport or swimming--water ruins an aid; a tackle might break the aid.

- Be sure hearing impaired players have a list of all games and practices, with places and times. If schedules change, see that they get the new information correctly--it helps to have a pad and pencil handy.

- Check that hearing impaired individuals know exactly what they are to do to insure safety. Don't assume that they understand everything said the first time it is presented. You say, "Tuck your head," when demonstrating a foreward roll. A hearing impaired individual might be embarrassed to admit he/she doesn't understand you and could injure the neck. Demonstrate physically whenever possible.

- Encourage parents to contact you in case of some misunderstanding. Be sure you know how to reach the parents or a relative, friend, or neighbor in case of emergency.

Here are a few ideas about problems that might arise in specific sports. This list obviously does not include every possible situation, but should alert you to other situations that may arise.

- Basketball. If a player does not hear a whistle in the middle of the game, he/she might continue to play. If a foul is called behind the player, he/she might not know and go on to make a basket that doesn't count. Hold your arms up to try to signal that play has stopped and ask others on the team to do the same.

- Bowling. Hearing impaired individuals are at no disadvantage at all.

- Dance. Hearing impaired students can learn folk dances or any dance by counting beats aloud. They should wear hearing aids, and the phonograph speaker should be put on a wooden floor so that vibrations can be felt. Dancing in bare feet or socks makes it easier to feel vibrations. Balloons can be used to facilitate feeling different rhythms and beats.

- Football. A hearing impaired player can't hear signals, so a system of hand signals has to be used. Some schools for the deaf use a base drum on the sidelines to initiate offensive plays.

- Gymnastics. The hearing impaired gymnast has to understand what has to be done. Don't give instructions while bouncing on a trampoline or while upside down on parallel bars, rings, or ropes. It's tricky enough to lipread when someone is standing still!

- Life Saving. All students have to do homework but a hearing impaired individual probably has to do more reading because of instructions missed in class. When practicing activities like the rear head hold, set up a signal system so that if a hearing impaired individual is in trouble, he/she can tap the hands of the partner, which means, let go!

- Skiing. Hearing impaired skiers should wear identification tags for their own protection in case of accidents. Little children should be tagged with name, address, and other pertinent information.

- Soccer. A player has to rely completely on what is seen and cannot rely on other players to call signals.

- Swimming. Be sure you have a way of attracting the attention of a hearing impaired swimmer. A buddy system works well. The life guard should know when a hearing impaired swimmer is in the pool. During instruction, if a hearing impaired student starts on a 25-yard lap, you can't catch his/her attention for corrections until the lap is completed. During meets, many hearing impaired swimmers cannot hear the starter's gun--a hand signal start is fairer.

- Tennis. Watch out for the sun when giving instructions.

- Volleyball. Hearing impaired individuals are at no disadvantage at all.

Questions You Have Always Wanted to Ask About Integration !!

Teachers, parents, administrators, and counselors continue to seek guidance and direction in determining children for whom integration is appropriate. Answers to certain key questions can assist in this process. Among key questions that can be asked to help determine if integration is feasible and appropriate are --

- For whom is integration appropriate? Is it appropriate for this child in these activities now?
- What personal characteristics make it likely that an individual child can be successfully integrated? Does this child possess these characteristics?
- Does this child have communication skills that enable him/her to function effectively in regular public school classes and/or community programs?
- Does this child have sufficient social and emotional maturity to be a part of an integrated group?
- Must a child perform at grade level? Activity level?
- Does assessment of this child's ability to learn equal or surpass that of other members of the class?
- At what levels and in what subjects and activities can this child be integrated?
- What supportive services are needed for this child? For his/her teacher?
- What is the result of a cost analysis of this educational practice for this child in terms of resources required and educational outcomes?
- Can this child participate in these activities safely, successfully, and with personal satisfaction?

Questions adapted from "Mainstreaming Deaf Students Using Team Teaching," American Annals of the Deaf, December 1977, p. 522.

COMMUNICATING WITH HEARING IMPAIRED PERSONS IN ONE-TO-ONE AND GROUP SITUATIONS

A difference is a difference only when it makes a difference.

Helen Keller said, "Blindness separates people from things; deafness separates people from people." Communicating with hearing impaired persons is crucial in whatever the setting or activity. The following suggestions for communicating with hearing impaired persons in one-to-one and group situations were developed by Lynn Smarte, Council for Exceptional Children (1920 Association Drive, Reston, Virginia):

One-to-One Situations

- Ask the individual, "Can you read my lips?"

  --If the individual says yes, continue your conversation in a normal voice and remember--

  --Don't shout.
  --Speak distinctly but don't over-enunciate your words.
  --Face the person.
  --Don't cover your mouth or speak with a pipe or other obstruction in your mouth.

  --If the individual does not seem to understand, offer him/her paper and pencil.

- Ask the individual, "Would you like me to speak louder?"

- If you can't understand a hearing impaired person's speech, ask him/her to repeat.

  --Don't pretend to understand.

  --Ask the individual to write it down if you still cannot understand.

Group Situations

- Inquire in advance as to whether the deaf person would like an interpreter.

  --Ask if the individual prefers an oral or sign language interpreter. Both may be needed since different deaf people have different preferences.

  --Decide in advance where interpreter(s) will stand.

- Blink lights to get attention.

- Try to arrange for seating of hearing impaired persons near speakers and interpreters.

- Make sure you have the attention of hearing impaired persons when important announcements are being made--e.g., changes of meeting room assignments announced during a luncheon.

Remember not all deaf people can lipread well.

Edward E. Corbett[3] raises a number of questions related to the ability of hearing impaired children to function in mainstreamed programs. What is needed if answers to listed questions for any given child are negative? What assistance in interpreting, tutoring, and communication training programs is needed to make answers affirmative? While these specific questions are posed in terms of hearing impaired children, similar questions can be raised for children with other handicapping conditions to assist in determining appropriateness of mainstreamed programs for specific individuals. Answers to some of these same questions can provide direction and assistance for formulating guidelines and practical procedures to facilitate the mainstreaming process. Corbett's specific questions follow:

Can the hearing impaired child...

...hear the teacher?

...hear classmates in front, behind, and all around him/her?

...hear the educational film being presented that day?

...hear the principal over the public address system?

...hear and participate in class discussions?

...hear the visiting speaker invited for the day?

...hear the guide on the class field trip?

...hear the TV or radio program assigned to the class?

...hear the exchange of friendly chit-chat at recess?

...hear the quick exchanges when going down the hall between classes?

...hear news and gossips during the lunch hour?

...hear sum up on the walk home at the day's end?

...hear debates of the student body government and run for office or participate in clubs and athletic events?

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[3] Edward E. Corbett, Jr. "Mainstreaming--A National Perspective." The Deaf American (Vol. 30, No. 3), November 1977, pp. 9-12.

FIRST STEPS IN MAINSTREAMING

The best reformers the world has seen
were those who began with themselves.

Regardless of an individual child's specific condition, various strategies exist for introducing and improving relationships between handicapped and nonhandicapped children. For example:

- Arrange with parents for special needs and non-special needs children to play together outside of school.
- Individualize the curriculum for all children, not just special needs children.
- Establish respect for individuals as the prime classroom value.
- Create a safe, protected environment so that children can risk forming relationships.
- Explain individual differences to children in a neutral, value-free manner.
- Read aloud books and stories that deal with differences.
- Answer children's questions directly and honestly.
- Reinterpret actions for children in behaviorally observable terms--e.g., "His legs don't work very well," or "It's hard for him to hold your hand without squeezing it."
- Encourage children to use behavioral explanations rather than labels.
- Design and guide positive interactions between children based on a common interest or curricular experience.
- Encourage all children to talk about feelings such as fear and anger--and help them begin to understand and govern these emotions.
- Encourage spontaneous dramatic play and role playing to help non-handicapped children identify with the experience of special needs children--e.g., using crutches, walkers, hearing aids, crawling or limping.
- Create opportunities for all parents to meet with each other to discuss their reactions to mainstreaming.[4]

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[4]Based on First Steps in Mainstreaming: Some Questions and Answers, by Samuel J. Meisels, Media Resource Center, Massachusetts Department of Mental Health, March 1977.

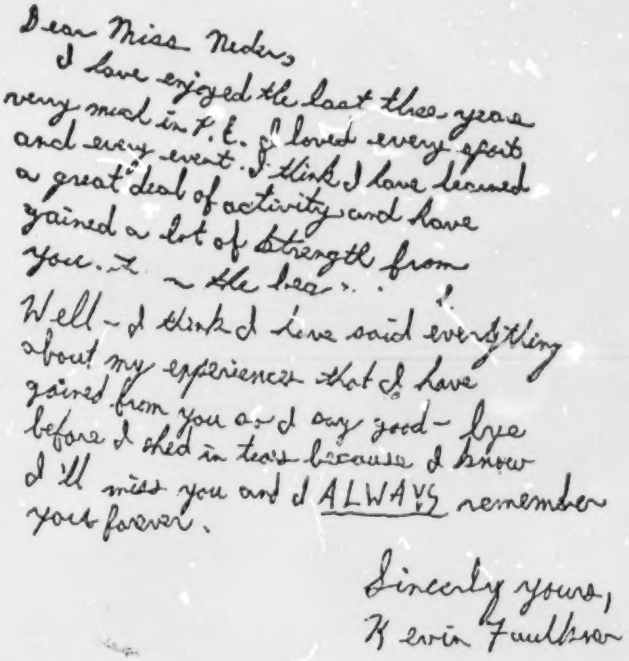
MAINSTREAMING DOES WORK[5]

IRENE M. KEHRT

When I first read this letter, I cried. My recurring, guilt-ridden, nagging regret returned. Many years ago it was so easy to give several rational reasons why a blind eighth grader could not participate in the regular junior high school physical education curriculum. Difficult, inconvenient? Yes. Impossible? Never!

Too often teachers are far more concerned with schedules, numbers, facilities, and activities than they are with the individual human being. Hooray for the emphasis on the "new" physical education. People, students, children are what it is all about.

Despite misconceptions and even past experiences, mainstreaming does work. Kevin sustained severe head injuries when he was a toddler. Now after four operations, a useless left arm, a plastic plate in his skull, a brace on his left leg, Kevin can talk and walk. His motor coordination is seriously affected, but not his desire to compete mentally and physically. Horribly frustrated and angry with his unsuccessful efforts to keep up with his peers, Kevin in the third grade was a candidate as an emotional stress victim. Supportive parents, an understanding teacher, a sound physical education program and a grade promotion resulted in Kevin's spending an evening composing this letter.



Dear Miss Neder,
I have enjoyed the last three years very much in P.E. I loved every sport and every event. I think I have learned a great deal of activity and have gained a lot of strength from you. I ~ the bea . . .
Well - I think I have said everything about my experiences that I have gained from you and say good-bye before I shed in tears because I know I'll miss you and I ALWAYS remember you forever.

Sincerly yours,
Kevin Faulkner

*Dear Miss Neder,**

I have enjoyed the last three years verry much in P.E. I loved every sport and every event. I think I have learned a great deal of activity and have gained a lot of strength from you. From the begginning of 3rd grade to up to now I have learned a lot of respect for others in sports as well as trying my hardest to get better each year in P.E.

I know now that from 3rd grade when I didn't get my way and just ran out and cried on the sidelines to the 5th grade, and haven't done it yet I have gained a lot of confidence in myself and to show leadership and cooperation to others. Now I can face a new life and show my ability to do things in the future and remember everything that you have taught me.

If it were possible I wouldn't want to loose you as a P.E. teacher because I have become so attached to you that I don't think that I will be able to get used to another teacher like you.

Learning from you I believe that every athlete should try his or her hardest to become a star in some sport that he or she likes and enjoys.

I never, ever, forget the moments that we have shared together. I don't think there another P.E. teacher around that tries as hard and has all the patients that you have.

Everywhere I go I am going to set an example to athletes exactly like you have taught me.

Do you know what I wish more than anything in the world?

I wish that everywhere I go you would be alongside with me teaching me knew skills so that we would never be apart.

But, I can't be that way and I still have to go to the Middle School and get accustomed to a whole new program. But I'll remember everything I have learned from you.

Going to the Middle School is not going to stop me from coming over and saying hello and tell you about the Middle School.

Well—I think I have said everything about my experiences that I have gained from you so I say goodbye before I shed in tears because I know I'll miss you and I ALWAYS remember you forever.

Sincerly yours,

Kevin Faulkner

Kevin wrote this letter before he was presented the fifth grade award for "Most Improved Athlete." His classmates, by a large majority, voted for Kevin from a list of seven nominees selected by the two physical education teachers.

Why didn't I take Peggy in my class those many years ago?

*Charlotte Neder, Physical Education Instructor, Lake Side Elementary School, Orange Park, Clay County.

[5] Irene M. Kehrt, "Mainstreaming Does Work." Florida Journal of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation, November 1977, p. 7.